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STUDY CIRCLE

FOUNDED
JANUARY 27th, 1954



Founder:

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E. V. TOEG, FRPSL

Vice-Presidents:

Charles FREELAND

Simon GOLDBLATT

BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE

Affiliated to the British Philatelic Federation

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<i>Hon. Public Relations Officer</i>	DOUGLAS W. NOTTINGHAM
<i>Committee:</i>	DENIS CHARLESWORTH, MICHAEL HAMILTON, DENNIS MITTON and STEPHEN SHARP
<i>Hon. Auditor:</i>	J.A.C. FARMER, F.C.A.
<i>North American Representative:</i>	W. CLARY HOLT

OBJECTS

1. TO promote interest in and the study of the stamps and postal history of the islands that comprise the British West Indies and in addition BERMUDA, BRITISH GUIANA (GUYANA) and BRITISH HONDURAS (BELIZE) and the Postal History and markings of all other Caribbean territories during any period that they were under British administration or control, and those British Post Offices which operated in the Caribbean, and Central or South America.
2. TO issue a quarterly BULLETIN containing articles, items of interest and other features.
3. TO loan books from the Circle library (home members only). Borrowers bear postage both ways. List supplied upon application to Hon. Librarian accompanied by an s.a.e. (9" x 6½") - 2nd Class postage for 150gm rate required.
4. TO publicist 'wants' and furnish opinions on stamp(s) and/or cover(s) for a nominal fee.
5. TO encourage, assist or sponsor the authorship and publication of definitive handbooks, monographs or other works of reference appropriate to the aim in para 1 above.

MEMBERSHIP & SUBSCRIPTION

MEMBERSHIP - Is WORLD WIDE in scope and open to all whether they be new or advanced collectors.

SUBSCRIPTIONS - The ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION is £7.50 for members residing in the UK or Europe and £10 for members who reside elsewhere.

Subscriptions (dues) are payable on 1st January each year and, subject to what is mentioned below, *in sterling* (by personal cheque or Standing Order drawn on a U.K. Bank, a Banker's Draft, International Money Order, Postal Order or local currency *notes* - no coins will be accepted - e.g. dollars, marks, francs etc.).

Members residing in North America (Canada, USA, and the Caribbean) who do not pay their Subscription (dues) in sterling should pay by sending to the North American Representative (see above for address) a cheque for USA \$15 made payable to "BWISC". Other overseas members who pay their subscription by cheque drawn in a foreign currency or on a foreign bank **MUST** add the equivalent of £3 sterling partially to cover exchange and bank charges. The overseas rates quoted include an element to cover postage of the Bulletin by Air Mail.

PROGRAMME

2001

21-22 September 2001	Biennial Convention
Venue:	Manor House Hotel, Avenue Road Royal Leamington Spa.
Speakers:	Andrew Robertson – Turks and Caicos Islands
	Stefan Heijtz – Barbados Postal History

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As you all know a philatelic organisation with a scattered membership throughout the world must rely heavily on its journal. The Study Circle is such an organisation and we are at present without an Hon. Editor of the Bulletin despite repeated calls for a volunteer from the UK membership. I hope therefore that someone will be public spirited enough to come forward and if necessary be assisted to commence with by other Study Circle members until the job of producing the Bulletin becomes a familiar one.

May I add that our former Hon. Editor worked full time whilst also undertaking the responsibility of editing the Bulletin four times a year unaided.

In future it is intended that the Hon. Editor will not do all the work himself but will be supported by other Study Circle members in the production of the Bulletin.

Please give this matter your earnest consideration and if you think that you could be interested, then you should get in touch with the Chairman, Derek Nathan, whose address and telephone number are opposite.

E. Victor Toeg

MINUTES OF THE 47th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BRITISH WEST INDIES STUDY CIRCLE HELD IN THE BONNINGTON HOTEL AT 2.15pm ON SAT. 28th APRIL 2001

1. Chairman's Welcome: The meeting was opened by Derek Nathan, Chairman of the Committee, who extended a warm welcome to the 40 members present.

2. Apologies for absence: Apologies were received from Howard Green and Brian Rogers.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting: The minutes of the previous meeting on 21st May 2000 as published in the June 2000 Bulletin were taken as read and were approved by the members present.

4. Report by the Hon. General Secretary (Peter Boulton): The arrangements for the Biennial Convention at the Manor House Hotel in Leamington Spa on 21 - 23 September 2001 have now been finalised. Stephen Sharp recently visited the hotel in person to settle the details. We are using the Jephson Room for the dealers and members' tables and the informal displays, and the

Willes Room for the formal displays. These rooms are adjacent to each other, thus facilitating the security arrangements. Stephen has managed to negotiate very favourable room rates, with a useful reduction for those who stay two nights. Although the Convention Day is on the Saturday, it is hoped that group leaders will take the opportunity to arrange meetings with their groups at other times throughout the weekend. The Willes Room has been booked for this purpose on the Sunday morning and another room may be available. It is intended that the Convention leaflet and the booking form will be included with the June issue of the Bulletin. A total of 26 rooms have been provisionally allocated to the BWISC, but the hotel will only hold these up to 21 August. Please book with me by this date in order to secure a room.

The 3rd. edition of the List of Members is virtually complete, and it is hoped to circulate it to all members with the June edition of the Bulletin. The list is based on the membership information forms circulated to members with the September 1999 issue of the Bulletin and information since received. The 3rd. edition is similar in layout to the previous edition issued in 1994, but, in addition, contains members' phone numbers, fax numbers and e-mail addresses. In the absence of up-to-date information on members' interests, the previous interests recorded in the second edition have been brought forward. Gaps in the 'Interests' column indicate that no information has been received. Please notify me of any errors in the information, or any alterations, particularly changes of address. These will be published periodically in the Bulletin. The total membership now stands at 343, of which 143 are overseas members.

5. Report by the Hon Editor (Denis Charlesworth): I have to report that this last year has been a more difficult year than normal. Material from members has come in at its usual steady flow for which I thank all those that participated. Midway through last year our usual printers retired and the new printers have a lot to learn about the ways of stamp collecting. Progress has been made with them and things can only improve.

Besides the contributors mentioned above, I should also like to thank those who have given help in the production and distribution of the bulletin.

As you will remember I stated that I would be resigning from the editorship at the end of last year. Owing to problems that have yet to be resolved, I produced the March 2001 issue in its new A4 format and have now handed the production of the June issue over to Peter Ford until a permanent editor can be found. For all members, an editor is needed and it is not a difficult task to do. You will have the help of the committee and myself and you should not have too many problems if everyone pulls together.

The format of the new size bulletin is now in existence and as such can be improved at the new editor's leisure when he or she gets used to the procedures. Thank you all for being so helpful over the years. Peter Ford proposed a vote of thanks to Denis which was received with acclamation. Peter said that he hopes to continue the good work of Denis, but only in the short term, until the December issue of the Bulletin.

6. Report by the Hon. Treasurer (Ray Stanton): I have pleasure in submitting my report as Treasurer and would refer members to the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2000 which were sent out with the March Bulletin along with the Hon. Auditor's report.

It was another financially successful for the Study Circle with a small surplus of income over expenditure despite the costs incurred for the joint meeting with the BCPSPG at the time of London 2000. Excluding the meeting costs the running costs of the Study Circle for the year were £2,682 (1999 - £2,884) which were largely covered by members subscriptions of £2,494 (1999 £2,538). The donation surplus from the very successful Millenium auction of £827 more than covered the net cost of the London meeting.

During the year the Study Circle continued to pursue an active publications policy which meant that stocks of publications and the work in progress on future titles were higher than last year which has reduced the cash resources of the Study Circle at the year end to £6,402 compared to £7,789 at the end of last year. Nevertheless the Study Circle remains in a good position both to continue with its current activities and to invest further in an active publications policy.

In line with earlier years, stocks of publications have been included in the balance sheet at nil given that they have an uncertain market value. The actual cost of production of these stocks at 31 December 2000 was £14,598 compared to £11,659 at the end of 1999 largely as a result of the printing and binding of a new batch of the Leewards book immediately before the year end to meet sales during 2001. I would once again like to thank Tony Farmer for auditing the accounts and for his helpful advice as ever.

7. Report by the Hon. Librarian (Derek Nathan): I have done my best to continue to fill the role of Librarian in addition to the Chair, but the Library has definitely come off second best - and I consider this to be the correct priority. Until someone comes forward to take over this responsibility, one of the best specialised philatelic libraries in the country will continue to languish. I have added very few books during the year, gathered a few auction catalogues and lent out a total of sixteen books to nine borrowers. For comparison, in 1999 we lent 79 items to 17 borrowers and in 1998, 110 items to 18 borrowers. If you want your library to continue to function properly, one of you will need to come forward and take it over. For those of you with good memories, yes, we did have a volunteer, but illness in his family forced him to give up the idea.

8. Report by the Hon. Publications Officer (Peter Ford): During the last year Study Circle publications have been very successful in that we have published one book, namely VOLUME 6 of the Jamaica Encyclopaedia, and one booklet, Federico Borromeo's 'NEVIS'. The Jamaica has only been available for purchase from today so it is too early to tell how sales will go; however, it is a rather specialist publication and we cannot expect great numbers to sell. It is, nevertheless, an important addition to the project and all due thanks must go to the author, Steve Jarvis for his diligence in compiling all the available data.

The second booklet in the 'Classic Collections' series, NEVIS' by Federico Borromeo has again not long been on sale but if early sales are anything to go by, sales will equal or better those of the first in the series of approximately 200 altogether.

Of recent publications, I must mention the award to the late Ron Wike's 'AIRMAILS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO' of the George D. Kingdom Literature Award by the American Airmail Society. This is an important accolade by the premier aero-philatelic society in the world and just shows what can be done by members if they set their mind to it. Unfortunately, sales of this book have been slightly disappointing so I have entered a copy in the forthcoming 7th New Zealand Philatelic Literature Exhibition in the hope that a top award will help generate interest and sales. Sales of this book remain at 70 copies. Michael Oliver's 'LEEWARD ISLANDS' continues to sell well and I have had to print an extra 50 copies; sales now top 120.

The future revolves mainly around the Jamaica Encyclopaedia. The delay between the publication of the first volume and the second was too long and if we hope to complete the 12 or so volumes whilst I am still sound in mind and body, we will have to publish at least one volume a year. The volume on Airmails should be next and I would hope to have that available by this time next year with the volume on Military Mails following on the year after that. Also, I would like to try and publish a new 'Classic Collections' booklet each year just prior to Christmas but that very much depends on finding willing volunteers to write for us.

As some of you already know, I am intending to emigrate to Spain next year on my retirement and, after a 6-8 month rest settling down in my new home, I shall continue to produce and publish books for the Study Circle. The one difference will be that I will not be able to distribute the books as now, but I believe that I have found a volunteer to do this task. I still am wanting some help with the publications as I will not be able to continue on my own for ever and, to be honest, I have other things I wish to do on retirement.

I eventually found some storage for the book stock but this costs just under £500 per annum. The books in storage are mainly unsold copies of 'DOMINICA' and the first volume of the Jamaica Encyclopaedia. Until we can find some member ready and willing to help in this respect, this will be an ongoing expense we could well do without. However, as I now print the books myself in small quantities we should not have the same problem with future publications.

Our colour inkjet printer battles on well enough but will not last forever and it will not be too long before I have to ask for funds to buy a new colour printer. Whether or not we can afford a laser colour printer is a decision we will have to tackle later. The Study Circle's scanner is now almost at the end of its life as there are very few modern operating systems with which it is compatible; however, as scanners are very cheap, I will be buying a new one myself shortly anyway.

9. Report by the Hon. Public Relations Officer (Douglas Nottingham): At this morning's committee meeting, various requests have been made to generate greater awareness of the BWISC. My thanks are due to those that have had items included in the Auction catalogues recently. I have dealt with requests for information from the public that have resulted in new members. I would like to ask members when giving displays, to recommend the Study Circle to those attending.

10. Report of the Chairman of the Committee (Derek Nathan): 2000 was marked by STAMPSHOW 2000 at Earls Court, and for many of us by the two-day thrash in partnership with BCPSG in this building. I believe that both functions were successful, and I am very grateful to the volunteers who managed to make sure that our meeting and particularly our auction were very happy events. It is not a good idea to pick anyone out from such a team effort, but we are all conscious of the enormous contribution made by Simon Goldblatt. Long may he continue his efforts on our behalf. On the down side, however, is the vexed question of the Bulletin. I have had a chorus of approval of the new format, even if the illustrations were not good enough, but the increase in size involves us in increased printing costs and even more worryingly, higher postage costs. You have heard what your Treasurer had to say, and I feel that an increase in subscriptions could well be justified. You may consider this, however, as the least of our troubles in this area. Over the last year we have worked very hard to try to find a new Editor. We did have one volunteer, but his ideas for future development and those of your Committee did not coincide, and since then, apart from general appeals, we have approached thirty individuals, all of whom had very good reasons to turn us down. For the next issue, due in June, Peter Ford and Charles Freeland are going to see to it that an issue appears. After that there is a void. Even this arrangement has its down side, as Peter will not be able to devote time to publications in addition to this duty. This is why it cannot be a long term solution. On a more cheerful note, I am most impressed with the efforts of some of the Group Leaders, and I am sure that more good work has gone on that I don't know about. I'm not sure, however, that they are getting the feedback from their groups that they deserve. I hope they are, and that this feedback will increase as the system evolves. I believe that a number of group meetings will take place at Leamington, and we expect to have a room available to accommodate them, or more than one if it is required. Lastly, you have seen the mouthwatering list of speakers at Leamington. I hope this and the prospect of Group meetings will encourage even more of you than usual to attend the Convention. I look forward to seeing you there.

11. Re-election of Officers: The President, Vice-Presidents, Hon. Officers and Messrs. M. Hamilton, D. Mitton and S. Sharp have all agreed to stand as members of the Committee and all are automatically re-elected. It was proposed by P. Boulton and seconded by S. Sharp that D. Charlesworth should continue to stay on the Committee and this was agreed, so Denis was re-elected. The Chairman reminded the meeting that he took on the Chair for a maximum of three years and this will be his final year; consideration should be given as to who should succeed him.

12. Re-election of the Hon. Auditor: Mr. J. A. C. Farmer has agreed to stand and there are no other nominations. Consequently, he is automatically re-elected.

13. Any Other Business: The date of the next Annual General Meeting will be as usual on the last Saturday in April i.e. 27 April 2002 at the Bonnington Hotel. There being no other business, the Chairman thanked the members present for their support and declared the meeting closed.

AUCTION REPORT

It was not the fault of your auction sub-Committee that the Circle only had 494 lots to sell this year. There were seven other lots that had to be withdrawn, victims of a theft that took place somewhere between London's Heathrow and Melbourne, where they turned up. Philately being the small world that it has become, it was not long before some of the stolen property was back in London, being

offered by a wholly innocent purchaser to the actual loser. Events moved quickly after that, and it appears that an Australian stamp dealer and an alleged accomplice now have some questions to answer in an Australian court.

The lots concerned were 191, 193, 339, 348, 378, 451 and 464. Surprisingly, four of these items had attracted no book bids; for the middle three there were disappointed would-be purchasers.

After the heady heights of the Millennium Auction, your auction team had their feet firmly planted on the ground. It was not until the final week that it became clear we were heading for another five-figure sale. By the start of the sale, moreover, 38 names had been signed in for bidding numbers, and only two members had to leave without making at least one purchase. So, as it happens almost consistently, there was even competition between the Room and the auctioneer's Book, with the spoils almost evenly shared. There is clear advantage on being present, however; we had to disappoint altogether 23 of the 78 who sent in book bids.

The total for the sale was £12,337.50 - the first time that we have topped £12,000 in our regular annual events. Not until about the last 50 lots did interest in the auction diminish, when sections covering Turks & Caicos, Virgin Is. (only 2 lots sold) and Literature ended with half or more of the offered lots unsold. We should perhaps consider arranging some future auction in reverse alphabetical order.

The high-fliers this year were generally in small groups. The Cayman Is. covers comprising lot 196 - 200 had, on average, six or more bidders competing for each, with the global estimate of close to £200 being almost doubled. The small batch of Leeward Is. mint multiples, lots 299 - 302, was even more popular, averaging seven bidders apiece competing, and totalling £144 against estimates of £66. The quality of the Trinidad single stamps featured on the front cover was widely appreciated, and here again a number of them had a series of competitors, although realisations were in these cases rather closer to the estimates. In all fairness, this is what we prefer. Great trouble is taken to make our valuations reliable, and if a serious proportion of the material failed to attract the necessary 75% bid, or sold at figures hugely above estimate, it would concern the auction team. Our benchmark is roughly, to aim to sell at least two-thirds of the 500 lots (about 70% sold this year) to worry if more than about a dozen lots double their estimates (11 this year) or if more than about 10% of the offered lots go for over 1½ times their estimate. All these criteria have been met, and we feel entitled to count this year's sales as an unqualified success.

There are of course always items for which one individual may be prepared to pay well over the odds. Which items, which individuals, and how much over the odds, remain a closely guarded secret unless and until the Book is beaten. Except where the auctioneer Announces a tie at the top of the Book when the bidding opens, the competitor in the Room never knows whether one or more heave will do it, or whether the cost will rise inexorably. We do, nevertheless allow ourselves to reveal a global statistic: collectively, the Book bidders had about a quarter as much again to spare over the total cost that they incurred.

One category worthy of individual mention is the forgery. There is a world of difference between the run-of-the-mill productions of Spiro and some out-of-the-ordinary example. So it was that the seductive qualities of lots 177 and 393 produced realisations of £54 and £46 against estimates of £15 and £20, whilst the weirdly awful simulations of Nevis (lot 315) had only just been knocked down at £70 when a member called out, "Oh I meant to bid on that." How high the contest might have reached we cannot resolve; for the hammer had fallen, and the auctioneer was firm.

There were buyers for almost all the pre-stamp covers, and we found lot 314 instructive; bearing in mind that there were no buyers last year for a later but clearer, example of the same mark valued at £250, a modest £120 estimate was thought sufficient. The result justified our first thoughts in the previous year, and the cover went for £220 on the Book. Perhaps the illustration made all the difference.

Certainly members like to see lots illustrated. Few that achieve that ranking appear on this year's unsold list - perhaps only 3 lots. Amongst these however is lot 404, which we continue to regard as a quality item, calling for a quality price.

Even in a highly regulated auction, the unexpected can happen. So it was that when lots 167-9 had been individually sold, with only one room bidder showing interest, the auctioneer suddenly announced that the next four lots would be lumped together and offered at a bargain £21. The same buyer succumbed to temptation, while the rest of the Room whether the auctioneer was impelled by panic, commercial realism, or an all-too-rare streak of compassion. Surely not the last!

Interludes when the Book and the Room are both silent are discouraging but inevitable. The longest losing run this year was seven Bahamas lots on the trot (lots 27 to 33). There was nothing wrong with quality or estimation here; these are items which would have sold in other years, and will again, once one or two more postal history enthusiasts latch on to the lure of the out-islands. By contrast - and this is probably a record - every lot from 296 to 321 found a buyer, with the Room beating the Book by 15 lots against 11.

Individual village postmarks retain their appeal and value, with good support for Anguilla, Antigua, Barbados parishes, British Guiana, Dominica (including manuscripts, of course), St. Lucia and, as we all expect, St. Vincent where Biabou in code and clear for lot 360 realised £130, Lot 146 contained a bonus for visitors - early 20th century covers for Hyde Park and Naamryck (2). These were not missed (valuation £110: realisation £180).

In the end there were probably only three lots where the auction team were wholly out of touch with current value; the two Bermuda censor covers lots 115 and 116 proved to be heavily undervalued at £40 and £35 (fetching £110 each), whilst several bidders were willing to pay more than twice estimate for lot 394's positional pin-pointing of the repaired 'slash' flaw. Assessed at £20, it went for £65. In expiation (but 'never explain, never excuse') we tend to be wary of a variety which cannot readily be identified on a solo stamp. So there it is. Our members were right and we were wrong.

One further aim should be mentioned: we try to suit all pockets, with lots that any members can afford, and others of high-level exhibition status. We hope that we get it right, and the number of those with serious money to spend is rising. Thirty-four members spent into three figures this year, one into four. Yet while this helps Circle funds enormously, and has helped to keep subscriptions continuously low, the auction team would like to hear from any member who feels that the auction would be differently and better run. We do not promise to change our ways, but we will listen.

AUCTION REALISATIONS															
Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£
1	650	2	52	3	11	4	31	5	21	6	115	7	37	8	38
10	36	11	15	12	28	13	9	16	52	18	28	19	10.50	20	7.50
21	39	23	70	25	44	26	65	34	13	35	44	37	38	40	12
42	14.50	43	9	46	110	47	95	48	27	49	23	50	52	52	31
53	52	54	52	56	40	57	60	58	54	60	56	61	42	64	15.50
65	70	66	44	67	8	68	14	69	7.50	70	2.50	71	5.50	72	14.50
73.00	4.00	74	6.50	75	6.00	76	5.25	77	31	78	46	79	25	80	44
81	16	83	19	84	6	85	38	87	105	88	13	90	24	91	15.50
92	46	93	1	94	33	95	22	99	33	100	13.50	101	38	103	28
105	5.25	109	44	111	50	112	30	114	16.50	115	110	116	110	118	19
120	25	121	60	122	110	124	26	125	25	126	46	129	80	130	30
131	58	133	30	135	115	136	60	137	180	138	38	139	75	141	13.50
142	31	144	23	145	46	146	180	147	23	148	40	149	7.50	150	19
151	21	153	85	154	46	155	30	156	13.50	158	30	160	15	161	90
162	15.50	163	28	164	26	165	15	167	3	168	3	169	6.50		21

Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£	Lot	£
174	34	175	15.50	176	38	177	54	178	28	181	40	182	12	183	60
185	15	186	11	187	15.50	189	23	190A	8	192	23	194	12.50	195	42
196	130	197	90	198	65	199	80	200	15	202	21	204	38	205	12
206	65	207	34	209	37	211	21	215	36	216	31	217	9	218	38
219	14	220	90	221	26	222	29	223	21	225	8	226	22	227	12
229	13.50	235	4.50	236	115	238	52	239	9	241	38	245	115	246	50
247	33	248	30	252	7.50	253	46	254	17.50	256	10.50	258	16	259	9
263	95	264	25	266	11.50	267	30	268	13	269	3	270	32	273	24
275	44	279	58	280	48	282	8	283	12	286	56	287	7	289	20
291	10	292	3.75	293	27	296	16	297	27	298	8.50	299	37	300	44
301	31	302	32	303	15	304	46	305	60	306	8	307	65	308	130
309	16.50	310	52	311	5.25	312	23	313	10.50	314	220	315	70	316	18
317	21	318	60	319	24	320	28	321	12	323	15.50	325	12	327	90
328	46	330	9	332	5.25	333	27	336	22	338	30	341	33	342	44
343	14	344	20	345	30	346	11.50	347	23	349	18	350	12	351	8
352	160	353	4	355	75	356	46	358	9	359	130	360	130	361	26
362	300	364	19	365	90	366	15.50	367	33	368	35	370	33	371	20
372	12	373	115	374	30	375	90	377	15.50	379	5	380	40	382	33
385	10	392	90	393	46	394	65	395	37	396	42	397	31	398	40
399	23	400	36	401	24	402	210	403	20	405	54	406	80	407	58
408	35	409	32	410	34	411	34	412	22	413	56	414	22	415	36
416	32	417	36	419	18	420	30	421	46	422	65	423	95	425	26
426	15.50	427	13.50	428	30	429	19	430	26	433	13	434	22	441	21
442	3	443	15.50	444	24	445	3.75	446	80	447	70	449	20	453	21
458	90	459	19	460	15	463	38	470	6	471	18	473	4.50	474	31
476	19	477	56	479	30	480	28	483	9.50	485	18	491	3	493	11
494	12.50	497	4	499	3	500	6								

NEW MEMBER

N. LYON,

Interests: Jamaica (postmarks)

ANGUILLA

Suspended Mail

I have recently obtained a cover that was sent from Rayleigh in Essex on 18th March 1969. The postmark is Southend-on-Sea 9-pm 18 March 1969.

Owing to Anguilla reaffirming its Independence again on the 9th January and the fact that the proposals then made by Britain for administering the country having come to naught. A senior British Minister was sent to Anguilla to try and explain the proposals. The Diplomat had no joy with the islanders and was forced to leave the island at gunpoint. On the 19th March, British troops landed on the island and a British Commissioner was installed.

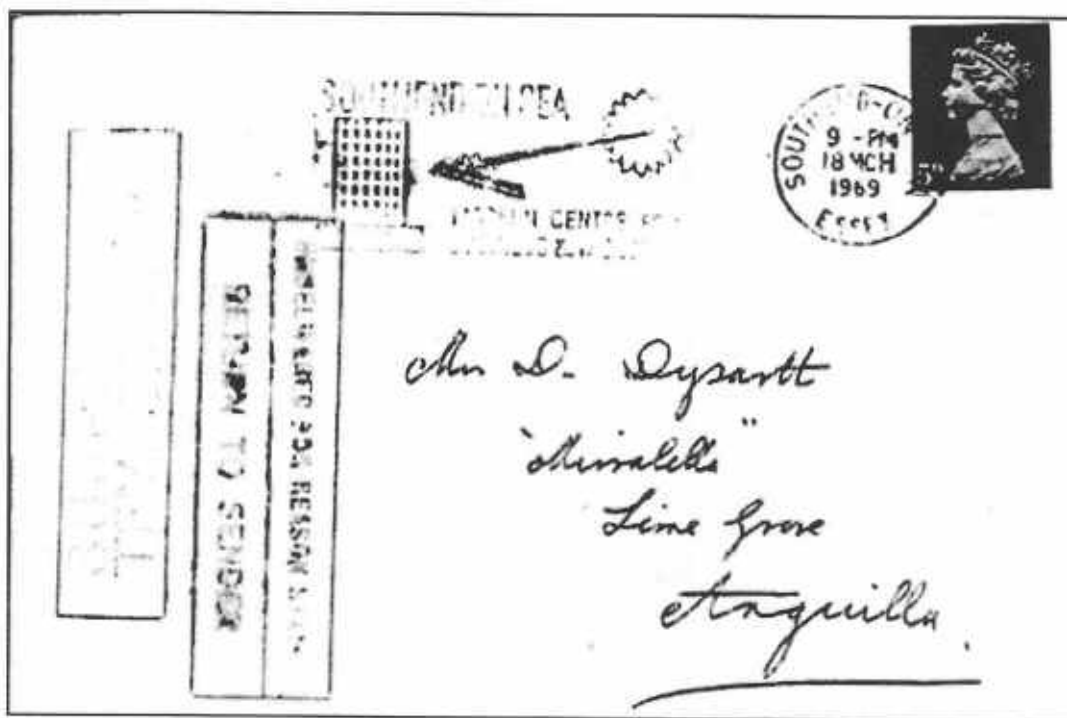


Fig. 1.

So back to the cover (Fig. 1) which was posted only hours before the British force landed in Anguilla. It was overprinted with two boxed handstamps in purple 'SUSPENDED TEMPORARILY' and 'UNDELIVERED FOR REASONS STATED RETURN TO SENDER'. The cover was returned to sender in a brown Post Office envelope Ref. No. 447 (Fig. 2) and the postage of 5d returned in the form of stamps in a small brown envelope Ref. No. 98.

Also enclosed was a printed leaflet (Fig. 3) UNDELIVERED FOR REASON STATED. THE POSTAL SERVICES TO EASTERN NIGERIA ARE SUSPENDED (A REFUND OF POSTAGE IS ENCLOSED)'. The words Eastern Nigeria having been crossed out and the word ANGUILLA' inserted in manuscript above.

Can anyone let me know how long the suspended service was in force and whether any other printed leaflets similar to Fig. 3 without overprint were used during this period.

I can either be contacted by post at 4 Hill Farm Close, Stafford ST17 9JE or by e-mail at denis@charlesworth4.fsnet.co.uk

Denis Charlesworth

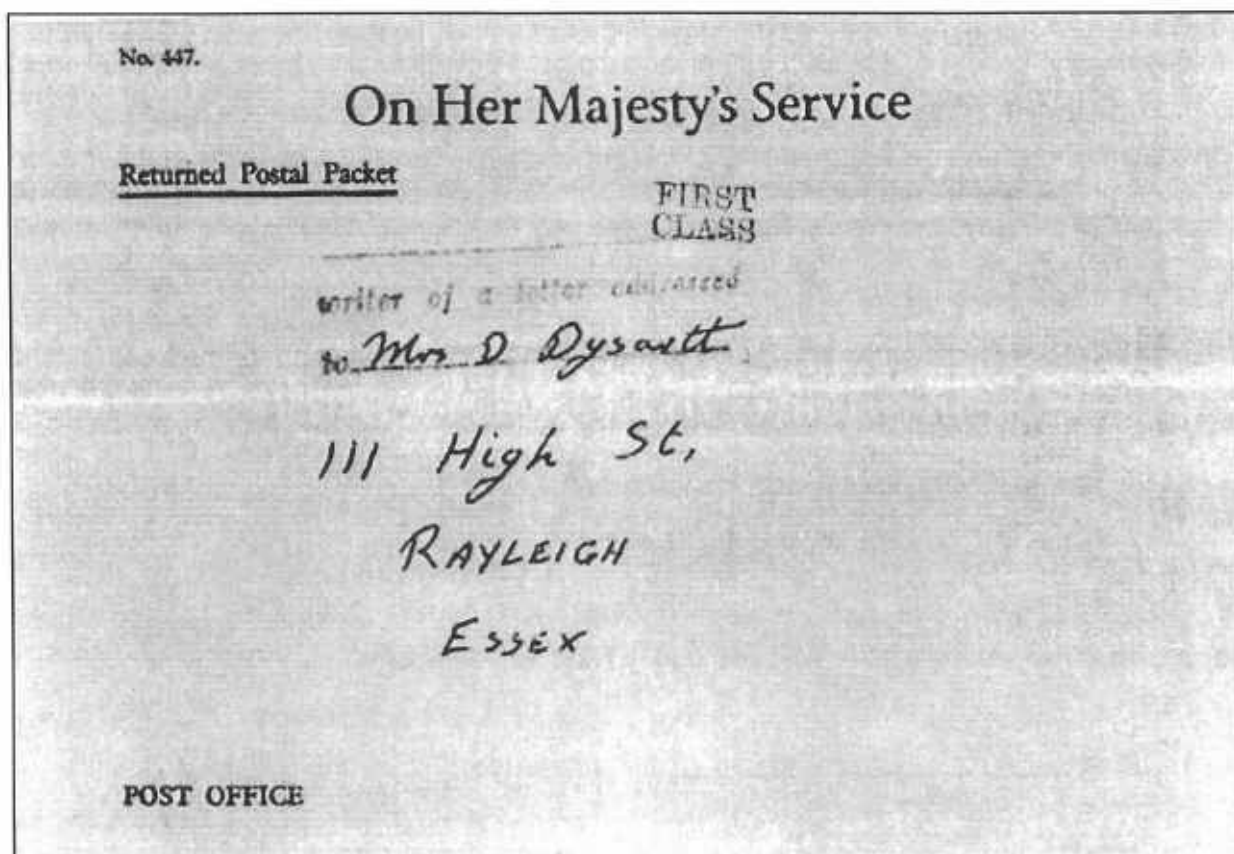


Fig. 2.

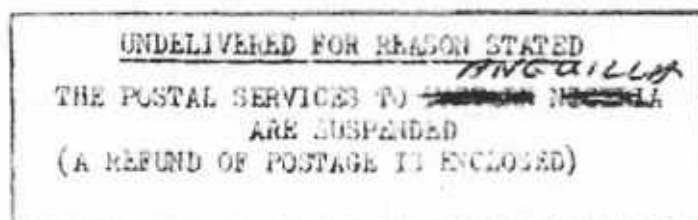


Fig. 3.

ANTIGUA

Stamp Duty: 'cracked cog' flaw

The eleven duties issued for Antigua in 1870 on Crown CC paper are not easy to complete as a set, not least because the top value, ten shillings, was limited to 1,000 stamps. Some lower values were remaindered and are plentiful in both mint and used condition; large mint blocks are still to be found, but used multiples are scarce. The shilling values, with the head plate in blue and the duty plate in vermillion, are notably attractive on elegant documents; I know of one such which bears 14 5s stamps to say nothing of six Leewards Fees, including three of the elusive £1, in the margins around the copperplate script.

About a year ago, I noticed an engraver's burin flaw on one stamp in a block of 12 of the fourpence CC value, which joins the circular cog-wheel design at four o'clock to the outer ring of the Queen's head medallion and thus strongly resembles a 'cracked cog'.

Examination of the rest of my holding revealed an identical flaw on the Crown CA one penny encouraging me to believe it to be constant, and a process of elimination gives its probable position as 3/6 or 3/7 in the sheet.

More recently, I acquired a Specimen set of the eleven 1870 values (the overprint is the mysterious Samuel type D9, and the provenance is Marcus Samuel's own collection). By a remarkable stroke of luck, five of the eleven stamps show the 'cracked cog' flaw, thus putting beyond reasonable doubt its constancy. Since it is likely that one sheet at most was overprinted 'Specimen', these values showing the flaw are probably unique.

The precise sheet position remains to be confirmed; could I prevail upon members with positional blocks or, better still, complete sheets of any value to let me know through the columns of the Bulletin, or through the Hon. Editor, their confirmation of the position?

So far, the flaw has been detected on the following values:

Wmk. CC 4d, 6d, 3s, 4s, 5s, 10s

Wmk.CA 1d

Reports of other values with a 'cracked cog' will be very welcome.

Michael Medicott



BERMUDA

New watermark variety discovered

Description:- 1918 1d red War Tax Issue, showing the **watermark inverted and reversed**.

Findings:-

Overprint: designated Type 16 by SG¹
in black serifed capitals measuring 18 x 2.5mm²
(later stated as De Vinn)⁴
Printed: Plate 1 State d (4th)³
Date: 4 May 1918 onwards²
Shade: Rose-red (determined by comparison with SG Colourkey)

Comment:-

The SG catalogue¹ records the 1d 'Ship' issue with an inverted and reversed watermark in carmine (SG46y), but new discovery is in my opinion clearly rose-red.

References:-

- 1 Stanley Gibbons British Commonwealth Part 1 (2001 edition)
- 2 Huber, H. E. *The Stamp Lover*, July 1935
- 3 Ludington, M. H. *The Postal History and Stamps of Bermuda*, 1978
- 4 Bridger & Kay's 1980 Commonwealth Five Reigns, 14th Edition

Peter Wilkinson

Postscript by Charles Freeland

The report by Peter Wilkinson shows that even after 80 years or more there are watermark varieties to be discovered on even the commonest stamps. Now that Gibbons have decided to list all such varieties and not just sideways watermarks as they used to do, members may have been communicating their discoveries to the catalogue editor. However, I suspect that some members did not get round to it and our Bulletin editor would welcome authenticated reports of unlisted varieties. I specify 'authenticated' because there are a number of phantom varieties that have appeared in past lists and publications that I have never been able to confirm and suspect were mis-readings.

To start the ball rolling, here is an unrecorded item I came across recently:-

Br. Guiana 1889 4c SG 195, Watermark Inverted.

BERMUDA

The Hart-MacLaren Transatlantic Flight

BACKGROUND

Due to its proximity to the East Coast of the USA, Bermuda has proved to be a successful staging post in several of the pioneer transatlantic flights. The Hart-MacLaren flight of 1931 was no exception.

In 1931 Mrs. Beryl Hart and Lt. William S. MacLaren, US Army, attempted to make the first commercial flight crossing of the Atlantic from New York to Paris. They intended to fly in their biplane, 'Trade Wind', via Bermuda and Horta in the Azores. Mrs. Hart was the well-off widow of an advertising executive who owned her own beautician's business in Pittsburgh. Lt. Williams was apparently a graduate from the US Naval War College who became a flying instructor in the Pittsburgh area. As this was a commercial flight the 'Trade Wind' was piloted by Mrs. Hart who held a transport pilots licence. Lt. MacLaren was the co-pilot and navigator. The projected starting date was 3 January 1931. Due to poor weather and damage to the sextant the flight was delayed until the 7 January. Despite these setbacks the first stage was successfully completed and the two aviators arrived safely in Bermuda later the same day.

Three days later they left Bermuda for the Azores. With a Bermuda 10 January dateline *The Times (London)* newspaper, under the headline 'Atlantic Flight Resumed', reported:-

"Mrs. Beryl Hart and Mr. MacLaren left Bermuda at 11-15 AM (4.15 PM GMT) to-day in their aeroplane Trade Wind for the Azores, the next stopping place on their flight to Paris. The Trade Wind, the first goods-carrying aeroplane in which an attempt has been made to fly the Atlantic, arrived in Bermuda on Wednesday from Hampton Roads, VA."

The 'Trade Wind' did not reach the Azores and both the plane and aviators perished somewhere in the Atlantic. Such, then, are the bare bones of the story of this flight.

ALBERT C. ROESSLER

The flight of the 'Trade Wind' would have been recorded as another 'historic failure' if it was not for the involvement of the notorious Albert C. Roessler. Originally a stamp dealer, Roessler developed his enterprise into a 'historical souvenir cover' business additionally selling first day and first flight 'souvenirs'. Roessler also owned a substantial printing business in his hometown of East Orange, New Jersey, and produced a wide range of postal stationery as well as his own souvenirs covers. He was also actively involved in arranging a number of the events which his material commemorated. In a period before commercial sponsorship had been invented pioneer flights were expensive operations to finance and Roessler would recoup his outlay by exclusively selling the souvenirs he had produced.

Roessler published for subscription a number of periodicals of which the best known were *Air Plane Stamp News* and *A. C. Roessler's Stamp News*. As well as being his price lists these also contained comments about current events and other dealer's products. Roessler was not averse to criticising the authorities, particularly those responsible for the post office, and was continually in trouble for his outspoken opinions. The authorities eventually caught up with Roessler and in 1933 he received a suspended prison sentence for reproducing Post Office material and defrauding his subscribers.

For the Hart-MacLaren flight Roessler was active in promoting philatelic souvenir items for the complete New York - Paris flight as well as the Bermuda first stage. Although 'Trade Wind' was the first goods-carrying aeroplane to attempt the Atlantic crossing, the only 'goods' carried were the covers and postal cards prepared by Roessler. In the event only those for the New York - Bermuda stage survived.

THE COVERS

The covers have a printed cachet of the 'Trade Wind' and a map of its cross Atlantic route. There are also inset portraits of Mrs. Hart and Lt. Williams and a three line legend, 'First Commercial/TransAtlantic/Airplane Flight'. These are all printed in green. Despatch was from Roessler's home town, East Orange N. J. The East Orange machine cancel is dated 3 January 1931, the original flight date, and the postage paid by a USA 2 cents adhesive. *Fig. 1* shows the front of a cover addressed to Philip Sondheim, the song writer. The airmail sticker covers Roessler's return address. As there were no airmail services from Bermuda the cover was returned to New York by surface mail. This cover is handstamped No. 75 on the reverse. Roessler arranged, through his agent, R. O. Clifford of St. Georges, for the Bermuda stage covers to be backstamped on receipt and then either re-posted to his subscribers or back to himself. Clifford's two line handstamp is discreetly placed on the bottom right hand corner of the reverse side.

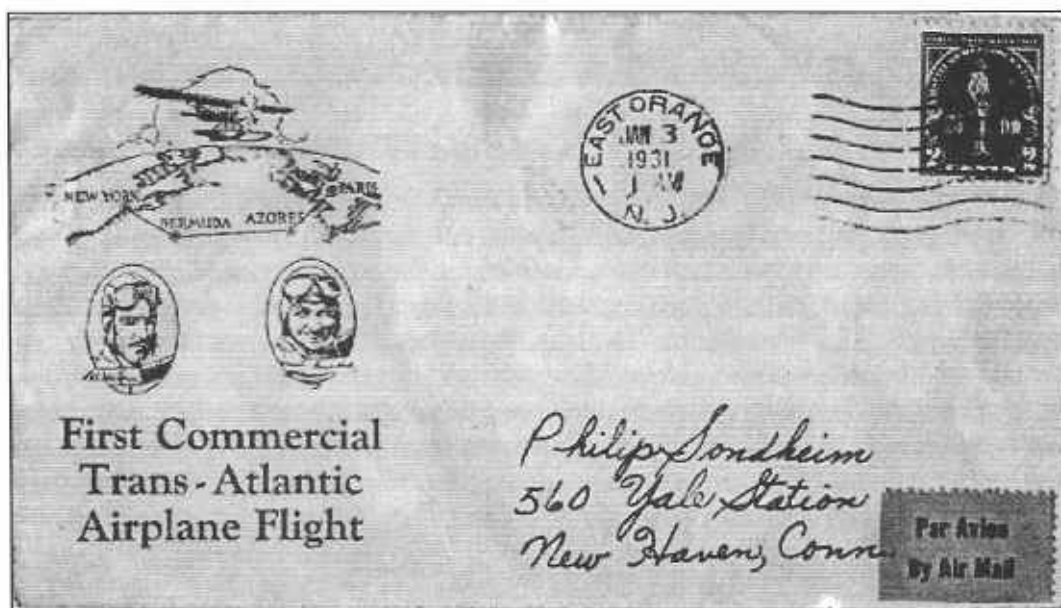


Fig. 1.

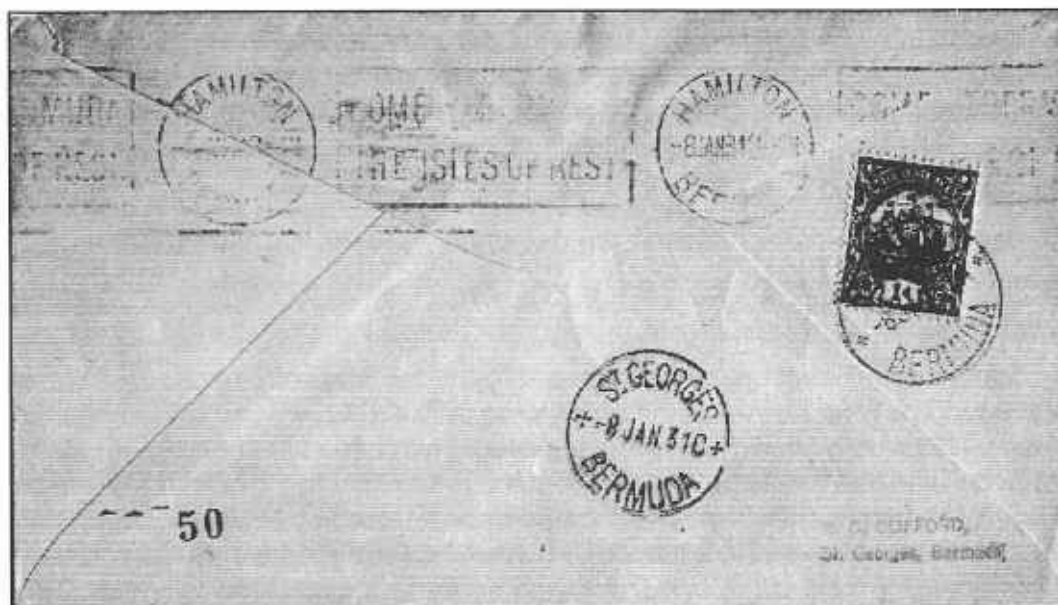


Fig. 2.

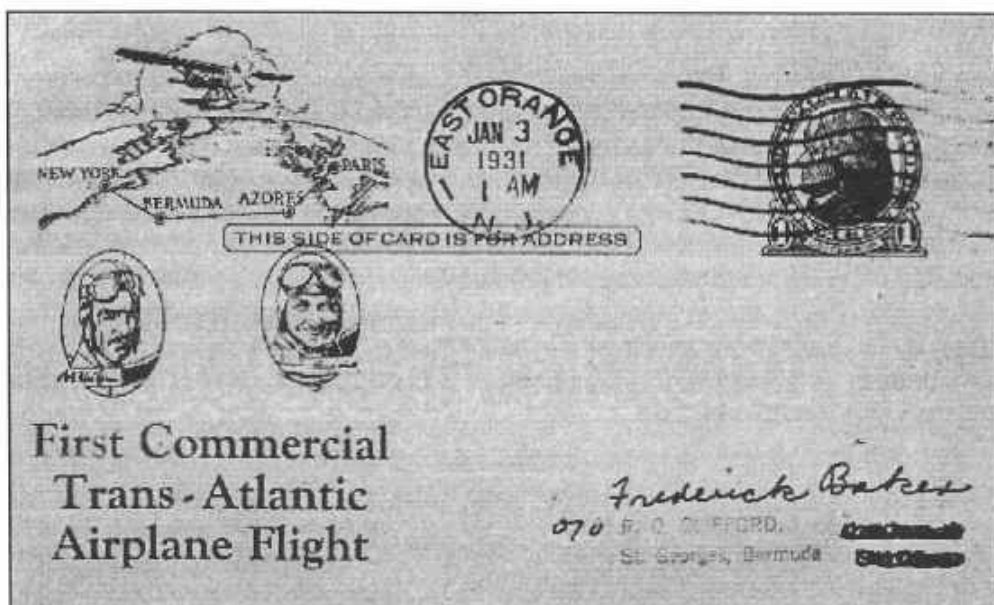


Fig.3

The covers were backstamped the day after arrival, 8 January, with the Hamilton M3 machine cancel. This was placed across the top of the envelope which was then re-franked with a Bermuda 1d MCSA Ship stamp, SG79a, from Plate No 4. Sometimes the stamp is placed over the machine cancel and on others the slogan cancels the stamp. The reason for the different treatment is not known. Possibly Clifford arranged for the re-franking to start before the Hamilton post office was ready to apply the cancellation. On some covers there is an additional strike of the Hamilton H11 handstamp tying the stamp to the cover. *Fig. 2* shows the reverse of cover No 50 with the Ship stamp over the machine cancel and an additional Hamilton H11 cancellation. On this particular cover the Hamilton H11 is lettered 'A', after the date, from the morning collection while the machine cancel has the afternoon collection's 'B'. All known covers have a strike of the St. Georges H11 evening 'C' cancellation across the bottom of the envelope. Covers are usually numbered with Roessler's numerical handstamp.

THE POSTAL CARDS

The 1c postal cards bear the same cachet and cancellation as the envelope covers. On the reverse of the card the Bermuda adhesive used to pay the return to New York is the ½d MCSA Ship stamp, SG77. The St. Georges H11 cancel is again used as the backstamp in the bottom centre of the card. Unlike the souvenir covers, the cards are unnumbered. The cards are found with the reverse either blank or bearing a typewritten 'message' from the aviators, some of which are signed by MacLaren:-

"Mr. Roessler,

First stage made—more difficult than expected—series of unfortunate accidents—the next jump our big test—the last stage Azores to Paris will be easy."

On many cards the 'message' is carefully typed around the St. Georges cds. This is considered to have been added by Roessler when the cards were returned to him at East Orange and not typed by MacLaren. Others are known where the 'message' has been typed across the card so that the St. Georges cds ties the 'message'. As the typeface is identical to those with the 'message' placed round the St. Georges cds it is probable that these were typed by Roessler before despatch. The cards with the 'message' typed in advance may have been intended for subscribers who had paid for the New York/Bermuda stage and those with no message intended for general sale after the event. *Figs. 3 and 4* show the front and reverse of a typical postal card. The reverse of the card shows the 'message' typed around the cds.

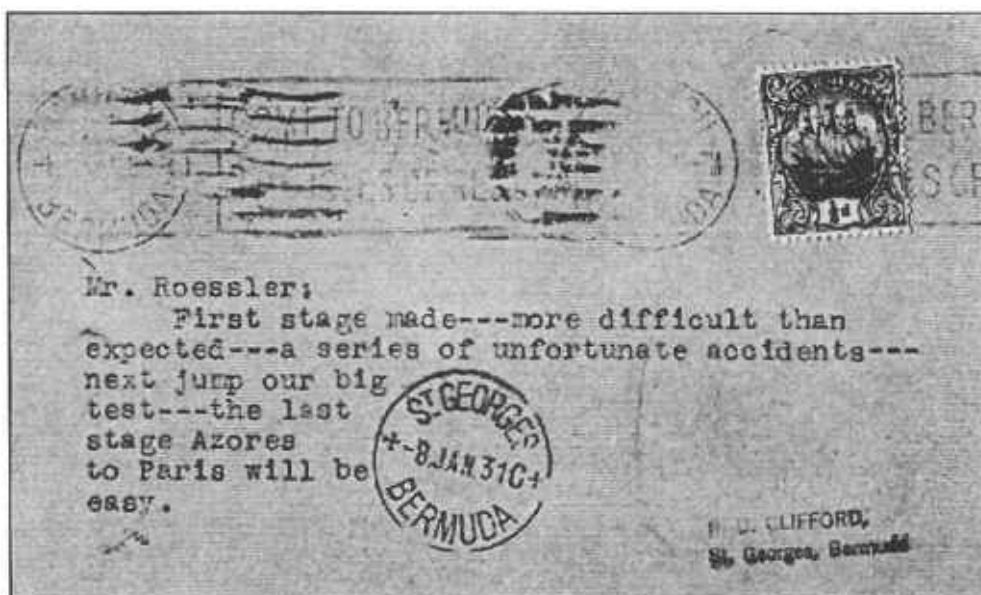


Fig.4

COMMERCIAL ASPECTS OF THE FLIGHT

It is apparent from A. C. Roessler's *Stamp News* circular (flyer) in Fig. 5 that covers from the New York/ Bermuda stage had been prepared for sale with the stated intention of charging \$50.00 for each one. Subscribers to Roessler's services had already paid in advance for their souvenirs of the completed flight. Roessler calls the subscribers 'co-partners' and tells them that "..... it was some of your money that enabled the ship to take off". The New York/Bermuda stage covers were offered to the New York/Paris subscribers as an alternative to their completed flight covers. Acceptance of these would make the subscriber "..... all square on the MacLaren proposition". In his haste to issue the circular Roessler also confusingly refers to "this card" as representing the flight for the subscriber. This appears to be an error for "cover".

Neither the price of the original subscription nor that of the Postal Cards is quoted. As the substituted covers were to be priced at \$50.00, the assumption would be that the original subscription was at least this price. As the cover in Fig. 1 is numbered '75' this would indicate a probable subscription of 100 which, if all had been sold, would have raised \$5,000.00. Roessler was, however, notorious for 'hyping up' both his material and prices. The price of the New York/Bermuda stage may have been quoted as \$50.00 so that anything less would appear to be a bargain. Towards the end of 1932 Roessler published the second edition of his 'Historical Souvenir Air Mail Cover Catalogue'. This catalogue devotes six pages of text and photographs to the Hart-MacLaren flight. The covers, originally priced at \$50.00, were now priced at \$25.00 and the Postal Cards at \$10.00. A note below the price reads, "These prices can't be maintained in the next edition".

CONCLUSION

It is unlikely that it will ever be known where the 'Trade Wind' came down in the Atlantic, or that any of the mail carried in the plane will have survived over the years. Without the business activities of Albert C. Roessler there is little doubt that the flight of the 'Trade Wind' would today be largely forgotten. Although his methods were sometimes questionable, mail from this pioneer flight only exists because of his commercial interests.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This is an expanded and updated version of the original article by the author which was published in *Bermuda Post*, March 1997. *Bermuda Post* is the journal of The Bermuda Collectors Society.

The cancellation references are those used by M. H. Ludington in his 'Postal History and Stamps of Bermuda'.

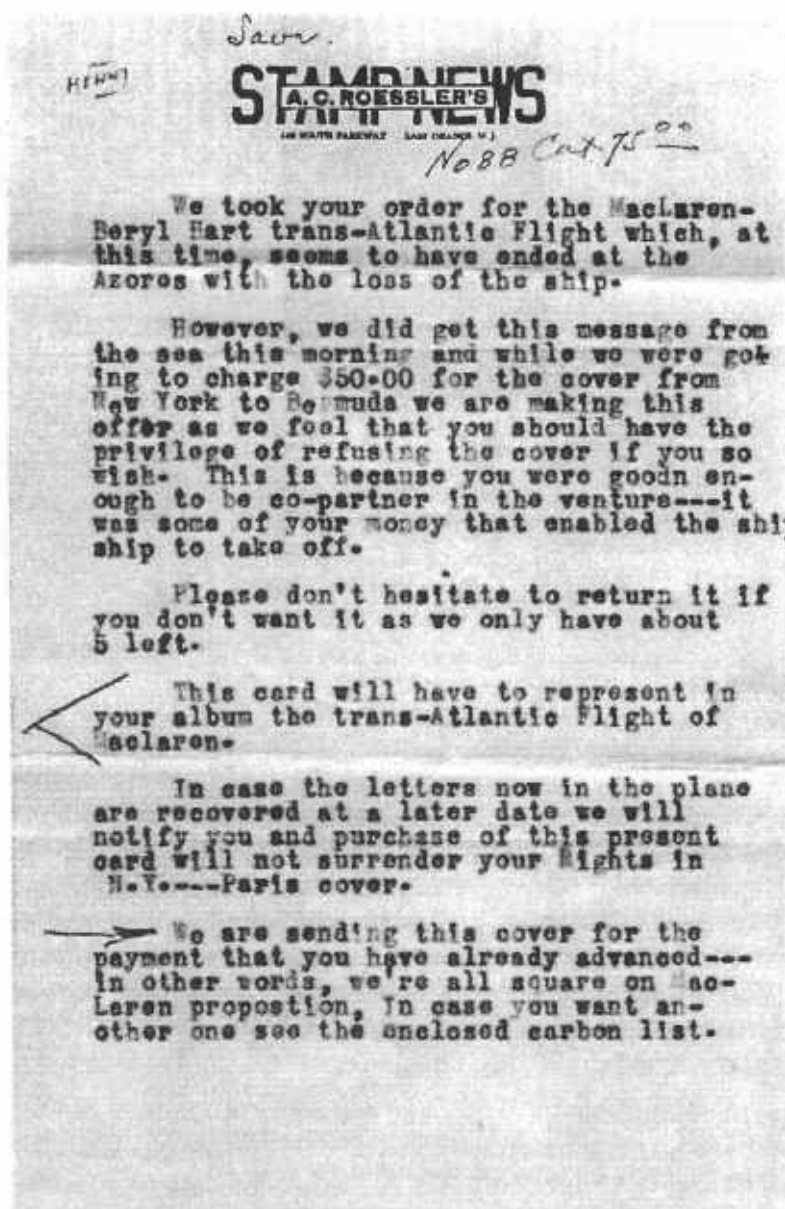


Fig. 5.

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- *Historical Souvenir Air Mail Cover Catalogue*, 2nd edition, undated. (Running heads give the title as 'Standard Historical Souvenir Airmail Catalogue') Published A. C. Roessler, East Orange, N.J. (c. 1932).
- Jessop, A. S. *The Hart-MacLaren Transatlantic Flight*, *Bermuda Post*, Issue No 42, March 1997.
- Ludington, M.H. *The Postal History and Stamps of Bermuda*, Quarterman Pubs. 1978.
- *Collection Letters and Times on Bermuda Datestamps*, BCPSJ Vol 3, No.1, Jan 1963.
- Newton, B. A. C. *Roessler Photo Cachet Catalogue*, F.D.C. Publishing Co., 1997
- *The Times Newspaper*, (London), 12 January 1931

Stewart Jessop

Advert

STANLEY GIBBONS

JAMAICA - THE FOSTER P7 'UTILITY' DATE-STAMP

One of the most intriguing date-stamps described by Foster¹ is his Type P7 which he describes as follows:

On 22 October 1850, a utility date-stamp was sent to the colony together with a 'double set of types and 62 additional letters'. This marking had a diameter of 33mm and with its multiplicity of 'slugs' and positions was obviously intended for provisional use in case of damage to or loss of any current date-stamp.

Only one example was recorded by Foster, used at Clarendon in April 1855² (Fig. 1). The Clarendon Type P2a was lost during March 1855, never to be recovered. The permanent replacement (Type 8), despatched to Jamaica on 16 May 1855, has a earliest known date of use of 25 April 1856.



Fig.1

Foster also records: "A further utility date-stamp was sent to Jamaica on 27th February 1858 but no evidence of its use has ever been recorded. It has a diameter of 27½mm."

Since Foster's study, three additional examples of the Type P7 have come to light.



Fig.2

Manchioneal, 15 July 1859 (Fig. 2). On cover from Manchioneal to Kingston. Illustrated in *Exploring Jamaica Through Obliterators* by I. R. Woodward (BCPSG, 1982). The reproduction is not particularly clear, but the date-stamp appears to be c. 33mm in diameter. Both Day/Month and Year slugs appear to be present, possibly inverted.

The reason for the deployment of the P7 at Manchioneal is not clear. A Type P2a instrument is recorded used at this office between 1840 and August 1849 and a Type P11 is known from September 1859. It is likely, therefore, that the P7 was used prior to the arrival of the P11 and following the loss of the original P2a.

Dry Harbour, 9 November 1860 (Fig. 3). Described as follows in the Robson Lowe auction catalogue of 4/7/1980 (Lot 1926) - 1860 EL addressed from "Dry Harbour P.O." to London, showing on the flap an unusual c.d.s. "DRY HARBOUR" (uneven lettering, apparently a "travelling" or "skeleton" type, not listed by Foster). It is known that the Dry Harbour office mislaid its A36 obliterator shortly before the introduction of the Pineapple watermark stamps (23rd November 1860). It is apparent that the Type P8 date-stamp, in use since 1853, was also mislaid at the same time.



Fig.3

Newport, 12th December 1862 (Figs. 4 & 5). A despatch mark on a registered piece from Newport to Barclay & McDowell (Kingston). The piece is franked with adhesives to a value of 10d (4d postage plus 6d registration fee), cancelled with the A59 obliterator transferred from Morant Bay to the newly opened Newport office in October 1862. The permanent P12 date-stamp for Newport was despatched 29th October 1862, but evidently it did not arrive in time for the opening of the office³.



Fig.4

The diameter of the Dry Harbour date-stamp is not clear from the Robson Lowe description, however the Newport example measures approximately 28mm in diameter. Given the date of use at Dry Harbour, it is highly likely that both items are examples of the second, previously unrecorded instrument mentioned by Foster (i.e. Type P7b, the Clarendon and Manchioneal examples now re-classifiable as Type P7a).

Advert

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These new findings help to clarify and broaden the purpose of the two Type P7 'utility' date-stamps, i.e. as temporary replacements due to the loss of or damage to an existing date-stamp, pending replacement or repair as temporary date-stamps at a newly opened office, pending arrival of the permanent instrument.

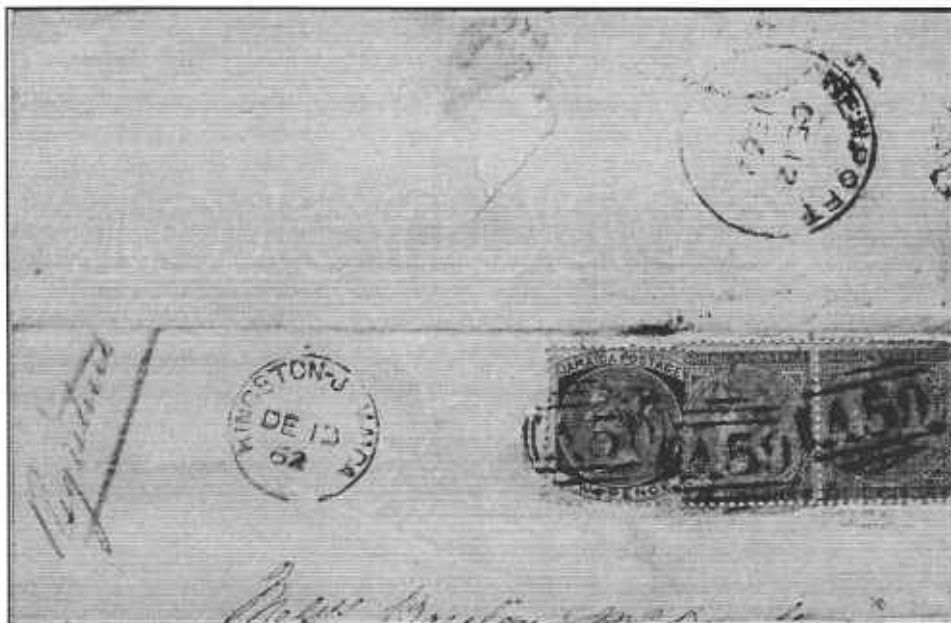


Fig. 5.

- 1 Foster, T. *Jamaica - The Postal History 1662-1860*, Robson Lowe 1968, page 92
- 2 Potter, I. A. *The Postal Markings of Jamaica*, I. A. Potter 1996, page 87. Potter gives the only known date of use of the Type 7 at Clarendon as 18 April, 1855 - this date presumably being apparent from the entire to which it was applied.
- 3 Potter records the earliest date of use of the P12 at Newport as 3 March 1863.

Bill Atmore

'NEVIS'
by
FEDERICO BORROMEO

This is the second in the 'Classic Collections' series published by the British West Indies Study Circle. Nevis is a difficult country to collect, with most of the little available material permanently locked away in institutional collections. The collection illustrated in this booklet is almost certainly the finest in private hands and is still being actively developed.

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MONTSERRAT

WAR TAX

The 'WAR STAMP' overprints in red and black on the ½d green (SG60 & 61) both include the short overprint variety which the catalogue states occurs on the right pane R10/1. The footnote explains that the 'short' overprint measures 2mm high as against the 2½mm of the normal.

*  Even using a pair of dividers, I am probably not the only one who finds it difficult to tell the variety from the normal but, when studying this part of my collection the other day, I realised that I had a used block of 4 of each (red and black) and that the lower left stamp in each case was the short overprint variety. With a block of 4, the variety is apparent even to the naked eye so this must be the recommended way to collect this variety! In case, however collectors are reduced to having to put up with a single stamp, it might be helpful to record that, in the case of the few copies of the variety that I have, the 'S' of 'STAMP' is, in each case (red or black), damaged. If the damage is constant, it could obviously help in identifying single copies of the variety. ** 

In the case of the red overprint, the 'S' is distinctly thinner at the foot (see *) i.e. the lowest right part of the curve is missing. With the black overprint, the foot of the 'S' is broken (see **) and this occurs on both my black overprint copies. It is a bit puzzling why the 'S' is not identically faulty as between the red and black except that the red was issued first and maybe the damage to the foot of the 'S' was progressive.

If this is already common knowledge – my apologies. I have NOT extended my study to the other BWI War Tax issues that have the same short overprint variety, such as Caymans or St. Kitts.

Chris May

Advert

Argyll Etkin Limited

TRINIDAD

'New' circular datestamp 1858

New discoveries from the classic period are always a source of pleasure.

Proud & Chin Aleong list five TRINIDAD double arc datestamps used in the period 1852-1882 and number them D1 to D5. A note under D1 states "known set with 5 under date", and I have a cover dated 11 June 1852, the earliest known date of use of D1, set with a '5'. The insertion of an additional numeral is also known for Barbados, and perhaps elsewhere, but its purpose is unclear.



Impression enhanced
by hand

Now an additional double arc datestamp has come to light, smaller than its companions at an extreme diameter of 23mm, and with a '5' inserted under the date. Date 'JU 09/1858', it cancels a stampless cover to John Jeffrey & Co., Edinburgh, rated '6' together with a strike of D6, code '1'.

Its London transit of JY2 means it certainly caught the RMS 'Conway' to St. Thomas and thence the RMS 'Orinoco' to Southampton; curiously, 'Conway' is reported to have cleared Port of Spain on 7 June 1858, two days earlier than the despatch datestamps.

I hope fellow Trinidad students will review their covers of the period and report any further strikes of 23mm double arc datestamps, which should now be designated 'D2a'.

Michael Medlicott

AUCTION REPORT - A Personal Appraisal of Recent Sales

Back in its early days, the bulletin contained a regular report on significant BWI material sold at auction. Since then, our columns have rarely been sullied by mention of prices but I propose, from my neutral vantage-point in Europe, to resuscitate this column with a rather different focus, trying to look forward where possible and reporting gossip as well as factual realisations. I shall be writing from a perspective covering the whole BWI and not the individual territories. Inevitably, because of the bulletin's irregularity, the comments will focus largely on past events and it will not be possible to keep members fully up to date with what is coming, but I will try to keep my ears to the ground and would appreciate being informed by members and auctioneers of coming sales of importance.

To set the ball rolling, I will try to put the current market into a medium-term perspective. In my judgement, the market was largely starved of fine BWI material for much of the 1990s. For those who recall the glorious 70s for example, there was a constant stream of fine material on offer, starting with the marvellous Br. Guiana from Fred Small and Bill Townsend, and including the incredible DLR archives, Tucker and Hicks Bermuda, Nabarro Dominica, Beach Tobago, Victor Toeg's Leeward Is and Montserrat, Forsyth BWI etc., all in a rising market culminating in the frenzied sales of 1978 and 1979 when it would have been possible to spend a fortune on BWI material. The 1980s started slowly as indigestion set in, but we enjoyed the Messenger collections and there were a steady stream of nice sales in the mid eighties, leading up to the marvellous Dale Lichtenstein sale in New York in May 1990. For the first few years of the 1990s we were able to cherry-pick from several neat offerings, especially Antigua. However, from the middle of the 1990s there was a distinct lull and it was not until 1999 that there was much to excite the appetite, when we enjoyed a glut of Bahamas (Sands and Ludington), Bermuda (Ludington and Dickgiesser), not to mention the rare feast for Turks collectors with three major sales within a twelve month period.

So what has been happening in 2001? The year started quietly, the first notable event being in New York at the end of January.

Phillips, 1-2 May

The strong March sales began with a two-catalogue Br Commonwealth sale at Phillips. The Amaryllis sounded tempting but in the end I found little to my taste, perhaps because I do not collect Jamaica, its main strength, where there was a wide variety of highly collectable material. Most of the Jamaica sold well. There were also good sections of Bahamas, Barbados and Leeward Islands. If I were to single out one lot, it would be the block of the Jamaica GVI 5/- line perf pictured on the front cover. At least two others must have been struck by it too, as it fetched £1,450 (plus 17.25%). There was also an item I do not recall seeing before, a used example of the Bahamas QV 1d with aniline back, SG 34a. Unused examples (almost always without gum) are seen regularly but neither the Staircase nor Ludington collections had a used example. This one went for £150.

I was unable to attend the Phillips sales but I did manage to view and was impressed by the depth of the Barbados collection offered by our member Peter Longley in the general catalogue. While containing no items of great value, there were many research lots worthy of a true student and these fetched good money, to the disappointment of some of our overseas members who were unable to view. For example, both the censor and parish cancel lots fetched double their lower estimates. There were several scarce watermark varieties and numerous GVI flaws, but the latter suffered from over-exuberant estimates and many were unsold. The highest price for a single item was £460 for the very neat 1857 cover to St. Peters. However, if our Bermuda enthusiasts think they may have missed something in the Bermuda collection in the same sale, rest assured that you did not!

Postal History Auctions, 16 March

This was the second auction held at the National Liberal Club in the past eighteen months to offer BWI material from Ted Proud's postmark and postal history collection of the whole British Commonwealth. A true student, who put aside any postmark or marking he came across and filed them in date order, Ted must have needed a mansion to house his albums. As his recent handbooks (reviewed by Simon Goldblatt in the March bulletin) reveal, the collections add to our knowledge of the marks and often extend the date ranges. Although some of our specialist members do not like the layout, we should be grateful in particular for the light they shed on the GPO marks, to which few of our members including myself pay due attention. The downside is that the material is often in poor condition and there is an enormous amount of duplication, although among the BWI collections there have been at least four spectacular items, an Antigua English Harbor Crowned Circle, an Ireland Island Crowned Circle cover from a Russian sailor and Demerara and Belize ship Letters. The country collections were first offered as single lots, but not many of the BWI ones sold, presumably because of their heavy duplication, size and divergent quality.

The March sale offered the postmark collections for Antigua, Dominica and Virgin Is, together with a second selection of items from Bahamas, Br Guiana and Br Honduras. I was glad to be able to take advantage of a stopover to attend the sale, if only to revisit the historic oak-panelled and marbled men's washroom ("Lloyd George sat here") at the National Liberal Club. As a dealer, Ted Proud has a keen eye for value and in most cases his reserves are set a little high for many tastes. There is rarely competitive bidding in these sales and lots are sold at 400 plus per hour. Because of a flight delay, I was not in the room when the Antigua, in which I had no interest, came up, but I understand the Antigua Harbor Crowned Circle pictured on the front cover of the catalogue sold for £9,500 (plus 15%), more than three times the less clear example sold by David Druett a couple of years back. The hundred lots of Bahamas village cancels rattled by with few lots selling and the auction only really came to life with the Br Guiana. Here, as in the previous sale of the same country last April, there were a fair number of lots that aroused interest and about 60% sold at estimate or slightly above. The extensive selection of postal agency numbers were in particular demand. A unique Br Honduras 8d franking to France sold for £650, despite being a little soiled around the adhesives, while several tempting-looking Virgin Islands TRDs were of equally

disappointing quality, which is why none of them fetched more than estimate. However, there were several difficult Leeward Islands stationery items hidden in this section that aroused bidders' interest. In Dominica, there were no manuscript covers to excite BWI specialists, and only a couple of manuscripts on stamps, which I found strange. The bulk lotting of several villages together made it difficult for collectors to cherry-pick what they needed and this section too passed quietly.

The Proud tactic is obviously to sell the collections as and when the books for each country are finished. We have had the four mentioned in Simon's review, and the Leeward Is book must be imminent. The next volumes due will be Barbados/Grenada and St. Lucia/St. Vincent. Be warned!

Spink, 22-3 March

This sale had two sections of choice BWI material from the same consignor, Bermuda and Virgin Islands. In each, the principal strength was in archive and proof material, with several items not seen since the Robson Lowe sales in Bermuda in the late 1970s. There was also a sprinkling of pre-adhesives and a fairly complete selection of stamps and specimens, but nothing very esoteric such as military or blockade mail, forgeries, postal or village markings, in fact the exact antidote to Proud. The origin of the collection was those archive sales, but the Bermuda had been expanded through judicious purchases in the Hicks, Tucker and Ulrich collections. I was hopeful of finding some bargains in this sale because the market for Bermuda has had more than enough to absorb in the past couple of years. Sadly, it was not to be, with strong competitive bidding on virtually all the lots I fancied.

I was only able to be present on the first day, when the Bermuda came up. The room was relatively empty for such an important offering (the final hammer price exceeded £200,000 plus 15% premium). However, as is increasingly the case these days, the telephones were busy and two phone bidders dominated. One hoovered up nearly all the splendid proofs, essays and unique colour schemes, accounting for nearly 40% of the turnover. Another phone bidder, a prominent member of the Bermuda Collectors Society, spent over £30,000, including several nice preadhesive covers, the 1d black pair on cover for £6,500 and the most important archive item, the magnificent 1883 colour scheme, at £18,000. One room buyer and an agent each spent around £20,000. Although most of the estimates were reasonable, it was a difficult sale in which to get any bargains, because those present seemed determined not to let anyone else steal anything! If there was a quiet section, it was in the 1902 Docks proofs and colour trials (mostly ex-Ulrich) where prices were somewhat lower than in both Ludington and Dickgiesser. But even here, the three colour trials with plate plugs fetched a healthy £4,200 and prices in other sections were comparable to the two earlier mega-events. Fellow BWISC members at the sale, Dennis Mitton and Littlewort, came away empty-handed.

As in every successful sale, there were a few crazy prices that did not seem to have any rationale apart from that fact that two rich people wanted something. If there was a bargain, it was the beautiful essay of the QV 2½d handpainted in ultramarine, which fetched £1,900 in the room compared with the almost identical essay in the Ludington collection that went for £6,500. But it is also instructive to take a longer perspective, and to compare the results with the acquisition prices 25 years or so earlier. In general, the prices for proof material were significantly higher, often by a multiple of three or more, but the postal history sections were often cheaper than in the Hicks and Tucker sales about 25 years ago. I think the reason for this is that in the 1970s nearly all the good postal history was locked up in the Ludington and Ulrich collections, and so anything that became available was keenly sought, but the release of Ludington's rich holdings have now left the market with inevitable indigestion. At the same time, postal history buyers are becoming more discriminating, so that lower prices have become the rule for lesser quality but exhibition material goes skyhigh. The key, as members do not need to be told, is to know what is rare and to spot the exhibition item at the regular price.

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Judging by my comparative lack of success, the Virgin Is also sold well, though the archive material was predictably less pricey than for Bermuda. What I thought was a strong bid for the 1899 2½d with imperf side margin was not strong enough, it sold for £450.

Sothebys, 25 April

I attended the sale at Sothebys in which the select archive containing the Neave and Batt correspondence, largely from the Galway Estate in Montserrat, came under the hammer. Although the archive consisted of only 49 lots, it was a very important one for Montserrat because it virtually doubles the number of covers bearing pre-adhesive marks that are available to collectors. For example, on offer were more than enough Montserrat straight-line marks to make people think they are common (fifteen in all), as well as rare marks for Dominica and St. Kitts. Those viewing were immediately struck by the five remarkable strikes of the Mont-serratt (sic) semicircle. When I updated Len Britnor's Montserrat handbook in 1998, I had never seen this strike although I had read a description of it in the

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FREDERICK P.SCHMITT

private treaty offering of Adrian Hopkins' collection in the 1940s. However, Hopkins' two strikes were on small pieces and do not appear to have surfaced since the brochure was issued. As so often happens after a book has gone to print, in 1999 two covers bearing rather feeble strikes of this mark came to light and I illustrated one of them in the BCPSPG Journal for June 2000. Another remarkable item was the 1799 three-line mark that looked familiar but Mike Hamilton spotted that on closer inspection it turned out to be a wholly new mark with different spaced lettering, two stops and two final Ts.

The sale itself was a grave disappointment to several of our members (Messrs. Borromeo, Greenwood, Hamilton, Jackson and Rainey were among those present) who were hopeful of getting some rare strikes on the cheap. The first shock was when we discovered that Sothebys had raised its buyers commission to 20% since its last stamp sale nearly eighteen months years ago. There was a strong room, but few could stand the pace set by John Taylor. The 49 lots went for about £30,000 hammer against the upper estimate of £22,500. The Montserrat straight line marks varied significantly in price according to quality and content, with the earliest good value at £720, the most expensive, where some spotted a second final T, £2,200 and the cheapest, a poor strike on a dirty cover, £350. All the rare ship letters (now not so rare) were in demand, several fetching in the £400 range, while the horseshoes ranged from £980 for the dirtiest to £2,100 for the nicest and earliest one. But the highest price paid was for the three-line mark with the new configuration, where two dealers fought each other to £3,000 before being trumped by a surprise intervention from one of our members. Finally, the two rare Dominica two-line marks fetched £2,000 each and a new type of straight line St. Kitts, with a small final S, were each bought by John Taylor for well over £1000. A lovely archive at lovely prices for the consignor and Sothebys.

Phillips, 26 April

Although there were no very extensive BWI offerings in this sale, it contained two sections of intense interest to BWI specialists. The most notable was important Barbados proof material, plus a few covers, from an old-time collection, that had been built up around the time of the Hurlock sales of 1958-60. These were absurdly underestimated and several went for ten times lower estimate or more, with the undenominated Britannia die proof being bought by John Taylor for £4,600 and the 3d Britannia for £1,200 (each plus 17.25%). If there was a bargain, it was the unique essay for the 1886 2½d made up from the master die with the value tablet hand-painted in red. This is a significant item because the handpainted essay for the value tablets in the Royal collection does not contain the 2½d tablet. A further section that excited our members was the St. Vincent, which contained a number of useful cover lots. However, as so often happens these days, the competition was too strong to sneak a Polignac cover on the cheap and again prices were up to ten times estimate. Incidentally, I noted a new and rather unhelpful trend in this catalogue where very respectable stamps were noted as having 'faults' without any further description - in many cases I could not spot whatever the describer did not like.

Future events

Next time I hope to report on the St. Vincent being offered on 23 May by Grosvenor auctions. This will include the collection of mint stamps formed by David Flinders Spink and another strong St. Vincent collection. For those with a passion for provenance, none can beat the Royal Collection disposals being offered by Spink on 17 May, sadly with a limited selection of BWI. By the time you read this, the price tags will be the talk of the philatelic world and the national press will likely have given a welcome advertisement to our hobby. However the biggest treat ahead for our members is Sir John Marriott's Trinidad, to be offered by Spink on 19 September. This will give members an opportunity to acquire gems not available since the first Hurlock sale of 1958 and the Charlton-Henry sales of 1961. A date for all Trinidad collectors' diaries.

WEST INDIES PHILATELIC STUDY: THE WAY AHEAD

The BWISC bulletin may have served members well in the past, but it should now take on a new and more ambitious role driven primarily by the one-country research groups within the circle.

At present the bulletin is largely made up of minor topics of the 'notes and queries' variety and the few more detailed articles are not well served by the quality of print and illustrations. From the time an item is submitted, it may well take three or even six months before it is printed and the same period of time to elicit a response (if any). This is in an era when information can pass to and fro across the internet and fax machines within hours. In terms of communication we remain in the packet ship era!

Increasingly specialists know one another and may find it more rewarding to exchange information directly among themselves, because they are talking 'the same language'. The response is rapid and relevant and while it is just possible an 'outsider' may have a vital piece of information, the odds against the bulletin coming up with anything is very remote.

The challenge is for the one-country groups, already set up, to initiate a series of specific studies capable of producing (say) three or four in depth articles a year, subject to peer review. The bulletin should concentrate on providing the platform for those specialists who will then be able to pass on a much higher quality of information by instalments. Depending on the space available, each issue might be designated with at least one year's advance warning to (say) four territories producing one or two major articles for the bulletin concerned.

The more popular countries would probably be allocated proportionately more space, but that tends to happen anyway. Hopefully a few pages would still be set aside for queries from individual members, and there should also be scope for a general or 'beginners guide' type feature written by one of the relatively few members whose interests straddle a sufficient variety of territories and disciplines.

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Pennymead Auctions

The key is to harness specialist knowledge for the benefit of the circle as a whole, and each issue should be valued as a work of reference in its own right. As things stand, apart from the general information about activities (e.g. the auction) I suspect 90% of the bulletin is of little more than passing interest to 90% of the membership.

The main problem for individual groups is to build a reliable database to a common standard and make it available through the most efficient means of communication. For some this may be on disc or CDROM but common sense suggests that hard copy will remain the main medium of exchange for some years to come. In any event the sources of material are still predominantly the printed word, particularly those in publicly held records. A huge amount of time (and often money) is required to locate and to copy the relevant records as I know from experience. But it only needs to be done once, and thereafter fresh information from other sources can be readily integrated.

It is astonishing and frustrating to see the same old errors perpetrated time and again simply because people do not have access to original sources whether it be government reports, post office announcements or photocopies showing the precise postal markings on a particular cover.

As a collector of St. Vincent for more than 50 years and a serious student of the island's postal history for 30 years, I know that limited financial resources can be enhanced by recognising, in detail, what you are looking for and what you are looking at. To this end it is obviously sensible to read whatever handbooks have been published but it quickly becomes apparent that the quality varies widely from territory to territory. Moreover handbooks become dated and some are limited in scope. PML St. Vincent, for example, only extends to 1900.

So what, in an ideal world, should a collector of St. Vincent look to the Study Circle to provide through its one-country specialist group? The following 12 headings are suggested not in any particular order of importance:-

1. A bibliography of all known articles published in general and specialist magazines.
2. Photocopies of all official postal announcements, news items and appointments, published in the Government Gazette and the Blue Books (or their equivalent), including the all important postal rate changes.
- 3 All Post Office Acts, Ordinances, Regulations and officially published tables of postal rates and indexes to official documents.
4. Reports and minutes of discussions relating to postal matters by Executive or Legislative Council and where appropriate correspondence and edicts from the Colonial Office and GPO London.
5. Photocopies of proof handstamps and postal markings from GPO records.
6. An index of all major auctions with extracts of significant items copied and grouped together for reference under SG numbers, corrected where necessary.
7. Photocopies of major collections BEFORE they are broken up for auction and sold. As an interim or more limited record, photocopies of displays or specialised studies within a collection.
8. A chronological database of all known covers at least to 1914 and thereafter for selected items (e.g. high values, village use, censors marks) to (say) 1955.
9. A database of significant multiples and rarities (especially essays and proofs) under SG numbers.
10. Photocopies and/or transcripts of the printer's correspondence and order files at least up to 1955, including Perkins Bacon, De La Rue, Bradbury Wilkinson and Waterlows.
11. Photocopies and/or transcripts of the Crown Agents records.
12. Packet names and dates & air routes and airlines specific to the territory, extracted from original sources and/or re-processed (with permission) from existing publications.

The co-operation of a relatively small number of collectors would enable most of the above to be assembled over time and to be distributed (at cost) to other members. It can be done by dedication and goodwill of individuals and the commitment of the group leader. Comprehensive records will then underpin and encourage the type of research that will be of lasting benefit to present and future members of the BWISC.

Vincent Duggleby

Editor's Comments: This letter comes from one of our longer serving members and is very welcome and thought provoking. I don't think that I would be wrong if I said that Vincent's ideas on the Bulletin were very much in concert with those of the Committee. His further ideas on the future direction of the Study Circle may cause some debate amongst the membership. Personally, I agree with most of what is said here; after all how many of us wish that collectors in the post-World War II period had catalogued and collected the postmarks of the time more thoroughly. If any members wish to write in agreeing or disagreeing with the contents of Vincent's letter, they can rest assured that their comments will be published. However, may I remind members that we are having trouble finding enough volunteers to run the Study Circle as it is; any expansion of our activities will need more than just fancy words, our members have to be willing to help.

Charles Freeland's Comments: Vincent makes many good points and I doubt that many members will disagree with the thrust of his remarks. We were titled the 'study' group because our founders had the same vision and the appointment of country leaders will, we all hope, promote that vision. However, we need to be realistic about what can be achieved, because the same step was taken by our cousins across the water several years ago and the results are not always evident in the BCPSG Journal. Everything really depends on the drive and organisational qualities of the group leaders. On organisation, the technology now exists for easy electronic communication and I would encourage all members to join at least one group. If they participate actively, the benefits in knowledge will pay off very quickly.

As to Vincent's 'twelve commandments', they represent a challenge for any group. They can be divided between essentially between one-off archival research (points 1 to 5 and 10 to 12) which could be conducted by individuals and more continuous data collection (points 6 to 9) where many parties may need to be involved. Vincent's underlying point is that many collectors (and dealers) have individually worked hard to assemble elements of each, and the time has now come to share the results more widely. There are two impediments, the readiness to share information that may have proprietorial value and the mechanics of doing so. The first can be overcome by recognition of added value, i.e. individuals have to be persuaded that the others will add sufficient value to enhance the value of their product. On organisation, we should not underestimate the sheer volume of material for even one of the smaller islands and to compile data bases for all the covers up to 1913 for, say, Jamaica would be a monumental task. My own photographic files for St. Vincent, a medium size island, take up two ring binders of over 250 A4 pages each.

One final thought on the need to make a full record of important collections before they are broken up (Vincent's seventh point). Absolutely, but the mechanics are not so easy. There are costs involved and it is not clear how the finance would be found. I believe it would be a good use of circle funds to have a colour photocopy made for the library of important exhibits, for example, where the write-up will be instructive. But a full collection? Recall that Morris Ludington had 65 albums and several of our members probably have more.

LEADERS' NOTES

British Guiana Group

Firstly, I would like to thank all those who have returned my survey of BG Postmarks; some of you have obviously put a lot of time and effort into it. For those who have yet to complete it, may I just give you a gentle reminder to do so as soon as possible. I would like to extend the coverage of our survey beyond the T&H Type 30 and look at all marks up to the present day (almost!). As I suggested in my letter there are other areas which I believe need updating from

the T&H days. I could do with some help with these as I now seem to have inherited the mantle of Bulletin Editor as least temporarily. With that and the publications, I cannot devote the time to coordinating any more work on the BG Group, so a helping hand would be more than welcome. I hope to be able to see as many of you as possible at Leamington and whilst I don't think there will be enough time for a formal meeting, we can obviously air our views on what we reckon needs to be done.

Peter Ford

BWISC Jamaica Philatelic Study Group

We have created a web site at: <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/psv.jarvis/index.html> from which you may navigate to the BWISC - JSG web pages. These contain the latest information concerning the various projects being progressed by members of this group. Updates are circulated to members, who do not have internet access, roughly every three months.

The web site contains:

- BWISC Jamaica Study Group Contact List (e-mail addresses and names of other members)
- A meeting attendance list (so that people can arrange to meet up if attending the same event)
- A Project List (see below)

We also intend holding a short informal meeting after the main Leamington event. Any other members interested in the group or projects should write to / e-mail me. Steve Jarvis (steve.p.jarvis@virgin.net)

Project List

Bibliography of Literature

The purpose of this project is to update and improve upon the work undertaken by Howard Gaston in the 1960s, which catalogued all published works relating to Jamaican philately.

Leader: Don Napier

Contributors: Steve Jarvis, Derek Sutcliffe, Paul Hancock, Malcolm Mattick

Paul Hancock has offered to produce an explicit index of the BWISC Bulletin & BCPSEG Journal. Malcolm Mattick has suggested an index to Tom Foster's newsletters.

Notable Collections on CD

Bob Swarbrick has kindly consented to me (Steve Jarvis) producing a CD containing scanned images from his collection (sold in 1995).

Leader: Steve Jarvis

Contributors: Bob Swarbrick, Mike Rego

This will be done by scanning photocopies taken by Cavendish Auctions. Most of it will be black and white but some colour will be added where purchases from the sale can be accessed. If this proves of interest then perhaps other collections can be treated in the same way, to provide a permanent historical record of collectors' endeavours.

Post Independence Adhesives

A planned future volume of the Jamaica Encyclopaedia, it is hoped to record varieties and proof material etc. The Crown Agents will be approached for permission to review their archives.

Leader: Ian Jakes

Contributors: Steve Jarvis

QV Keyplates Adhesives

A lot of information was available for the 1927 handbook but Paul Wright has obtained the original Dr. Simpson collection and is pursuing further studies on this issue.

Leader: Paul Wright

Contributors: Steve Jarvis

QV Vendryes Overprints On Adhesives

The Officials and 2½d on 4d, again a well researched topic but Paul Wright is studying these issues.

Leader: Paul Wright

Contributors:

QV DLR Official Overprint

The late Hugh James conducted research on this topic but there seems further potential for this neglected issue.

Leader: Paul Wright

Contributors: Steve Jarvis

Jamaica Bishop Marks

Don Napier has expressed a desire to collate all known information on this rare mark.

Leader: Don Napier

Contributors:

Street Letter Boxes

There are several questions regarding the accuracy of the paper produced on this subject by Tom Foster and further information is likely to be available. Bob Swarbrick has produced a going-in position which Bill Atmore has supplemented. It is planned to publish a draft for comment within the next couple of months.

Leader: Bob Swarbrick/Steve Jarvis

Contributors: Bill Atmore

Travelling Post Offices (TPOs)

Bob Swarbrick has drafted a paper on this topic which will be put on circulation shortly. I have a copy of a Tom Foster article covering the Highway TPOs which I do not think was published. Bob and I are working on this for publication

Leader: Bob Swarbrick/Steve Jarvis

Contributors:

Jamaica Railway

No takers for this suggestion but I may have a go myself at some time.

Squared Circle Rarity Listing

Bill Atmore has made a start on this study. The objective is to produce a rarity listing like that undertaken by Topaz for the obliterations.

Leader: Bill Atmore

Contributors: Ray Stanton, Bill Witschard

Single Ring Date Stamps Rarity Listing

Bill Atmore has made a start on this study. The objective is to produce a rarity listing like that undertaken by Topaz for the obliterations.

Leader: Bill Atmore

Contributors: Ray Stanton, Bill Witschard

Meter Marks

Leader: Derek Sutcliffe

Contributors:

Jamaica Institutions / Free Marks

Leader: Derek Sutcliffe

Contributors: Tom Giraldi, Dingle Smith

Jamaica Postcards

This project is already well advanced.

Leader: Tom Giraldi

Contributors: Derek Sutcliffe,
Ian Brandon, Mike Rego

Major / Col. Kent

Many covers from Jamaica are addressed to this Major Kent in India and the UK. Bill Atmore is compiling a list of known covers and seeking information about the man and his connections in Jamaica.

Leader: Bill Atmore

Contributors: Mike Hamilton, Steve Jarvis

Airmails

A future volume of the Jamaican Encyclopedia that is well advanced.

Leader: David Atkinson

Contributors: Derek Sutcliffe,
Dingle Smith

Registered / Money Letters

This topic is already in progress concentrating on the 19th Century.

Leader: Dingle Smith

Contributors: Bill Atmore, Paul Wright

Jamaica Used Abroad

Suggested by Bill Atmore as worthy of research.

Steve Jarvis

Leeward Islands Group

Due to the very disappointing lack of response, no plans to arrange a group meeting are being made at the present time.

Michael Oliver

Trinidad Group

As recently appointed leader of the Trinidad specialist group of the circle I realised I had better start taking a more active role, especially having heard how other nominated specialists

were stealing a march on me. Embracing the new technology I have created a newsgroup for those interested in Trinidad philately. So far there are 10 of us and it is beginning to work well. We are currently listing all known Trinidad Perkins Bacon and litho covers we own with scans in colour and seeking out examples of missing postmarks to aid David Horry's study. Thanks to the internet there can be a very quick interchange of information with queries answered effortlessly. If you are at all interested in Trinidad or just curious please become a member.

How to join:-

- 1) Go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/>
- 2) Create a user name and password
- 3) Search for 'trinidadphilately'
- 4) Click on 'Subscribe'

Note this will not immediately enable you to view the messages and images. I need to approve your membership which I shall do next time I am online. I will also send you an e mail to welcome you.

David Druett

BRITISH CARIBBEAN PHILATELIC STUDY GROUP

RECENT MONOGRAPHS (All prices include surface postage)

Leeward Islands: A Postal History Anthology
(Pub-1997) 74p. £13

Ludington. Postal History of Blockade Running
Through Bermuda, 1861-1865
(Pub 1996) 51 p. £13

Forand & Freeland, Bermuda Mails to 1865
(Pub-1995) 124p. £13

Devaux, Early Air Mails of Saint Lucia
(Pub-1993) 26p. £6.50

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